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(R)

Life Death
Dubs 4/14/78

Moscow has attentively studied the communication of the US Government in connection with the tragic events which lead to the death of the US Ambassador to Kabul A.Dubs.

As the US side is well aware the Soviet Union, as a matter of principle, is against the acts of terrorism which disrupt diplomatic activities of states and their representatives, the normal course of international contacts, against the acts of violence involving senseless death of people. From these positions we approach this incident and condemn this act of terrorism.

The Government of Afghanistan has issued an official statement in which all the circumstances of what had happened are explained and the incident is characterized as "actions of the enemies of the people of Afghanistan". As follows also from that statement the Afghan authorities took necessary measures to save the US Ambassador from the hands of the terrorists. As we understand it, appropriate clarifications were also given by the Afghan side to the US Government.

The fact that the Ambassador fell victim of the terrorists causes profound regret.

At the same time we cannot disregard the assertions contained in the US communication about some indirect responsibility of the Soviet side for these tragic events and we resolutely reject these assertions as groundless. A thorough inquiry which was undertaken showed that neither members of the Soviet Embassy nor other Soviet citizens in Kabul had anything to do with the decision of the Afghan authorities about the nature of actions to save the US Ambassador from the hands of the terrorists. Obviously, they could not "instruct" the Afghan authorities how they should act in affairs which are within the exclusive competence of Afghanistan. And the Afghans themselves did not ask anybody what they should do.

Staff members of the Soviet Embassy like those of the US Embassy were present in the area of the "Kabul" hotel during

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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EDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH.

REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASEABLE ☒

RELEASE DENIED ☐

EXEMPTIONS

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

the incident. The presence of our personnel there was caused by the necessity to take measures to evacuate Soviet citizens staying in the hotel whose lives were in jeopardy as a result of the terrorists' actions. They did not perform any other functions there and the US representatives who were on the scene could not but see it.

The only thing said by one of the Soviet officials within the premises of the hotel, by the way, in the presence of US officials, was to the effect that it was necessary to gain time to save the life of the Ambassador. However, under the circumstances the Afghan authorities seemed to have no other choice but to decide to undertake an assault since only few minutes were left before the expiration of the ultimatum made by the terrorists who threatened to kill the Ambassador.

One cannot agree either with the manner in which the US side interpretes the chance contact which took place under those circumstances between a member of the Soviet Embassy and that of the US Embassy. Apparently some of your personnel is engaged in deception to absolve oneself.

It is only to be regretted that the US side has resorted to charges based on false information and all the more has made public this deception.

The attempts to link artificially this tragic incident to the Soviet-US relations and thus to cast a shadow on these relations do not in our conviction meet the interests of either side.

*Delivered by
Dobrynin to Christy
2/16/79
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